

Supporting Cancer Control in Low- and Middle-Income Countries during COVID-19: The IAEA-WHO-IARC imPACT Review Hybrid Modality

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PURPOSE

Under the WHO-IAEA Joint Programme on Cancer Control, the International Atomic Energy Agency's (IAEA) Programme of Action for Cancer Therapy (PACT) supports Member States through assessments of national cancer control capacities and needs (imPACT Reviews) related to the entire cancer continuum. imPACT reviews are conducted jointly with the World Health Organization (WHO) and the International Agency for Research on Cancer (IARC), and other partners as appropriate.

The COVID-19 pandemic has caused delays and disruptions in cancer control efforts and care. To ensure continuity of support to Member States, in particular low- and middle- income countries, in the review of cancer control capacities and future planning, a hybrid modality with a virtual component has been adopted for imPACT Reviews in alignment with the UN Sustainable Development Goal 3.

METHODS

- Series of online meetings bringing together stakeholders, partners and international experts across the cancer control continuum
- Photos, recorded video and virtual live walk-throughs of health facilities
- Real time exchanges with international experts via video chat during hospital visits
- Findings and recommendations across cancer control continuum consolidated into a report for the Ministry of Health, taking into consideration the impact of COVID-19 on cancer-related health services
- Specific focus on cervical and paediatric cancer coordinated with the WHO Global Strategy to Accelerate the Elimination of Cervical Cancer and the WHO Global Initiative for Childhood Cancer
- Validation of findings in-country once travel limitations lift
- Lessons learned from the virtual activities to be integrated into methodology

CONCLUSION

The new hybrid modality ensures continuity of evidence-based cancer control analysis and recommendations while fostering stronger government engagement and national ownership.

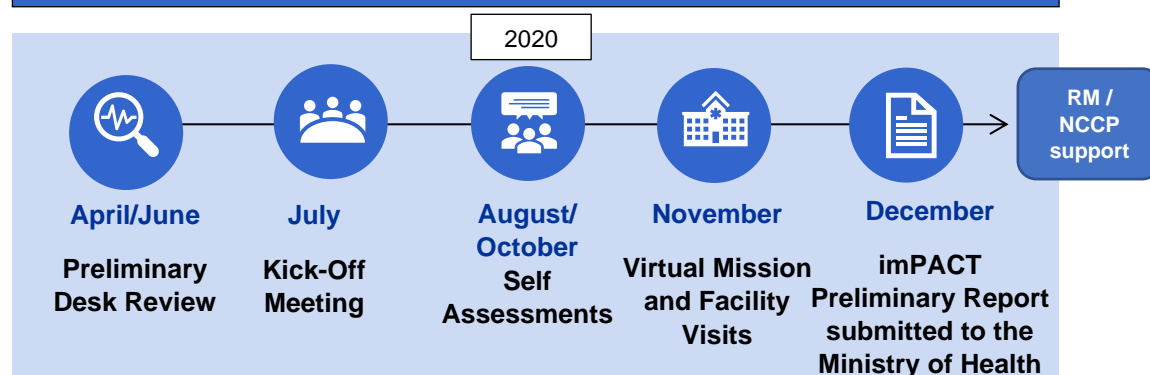
This is made possible by convening meetings with broader groups of stakeholders, international experts, partners and national authorities.

This virtual component may be considered also for future imPACT Reviews to take advantage of the below benefits of involving a higher number of institutions and experts.

BENEFITS

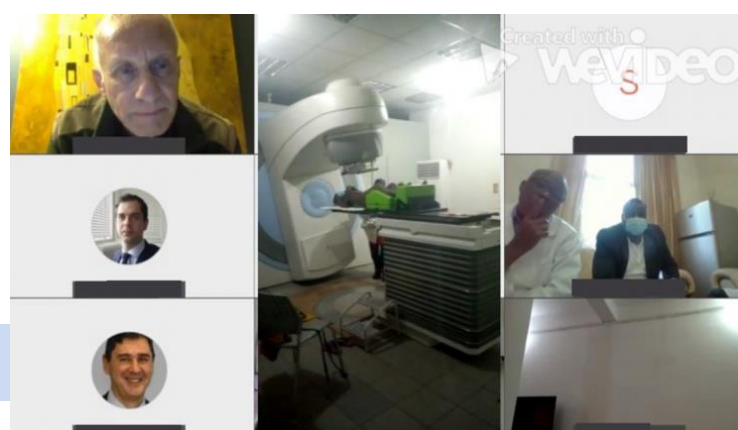
- Involvement of more experts in the discussions
- Expert and stakeholders can participate remotely, minimizing disruption to their work
- Ability to virtually visit more health facilities, a major advantage in geographically large countries
- Sustained dialogue over a longer period of time, contributing to a stronger collaborative network between experts and national institutions

RESULTS



SENEGAL

MALI



As part of the imPACT Review, independent cancer experts virtually assess in real time the radiotherapy facility at the Mali Hospital in Bamako in collaboration with national medical staff. (Photo: Mali Ministry of Public Health and Hygiene)

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